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SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/S JNAMDE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/07/2014

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ZA](#)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT BANDA DOES THE SUB-CABINET SHUFFLE

REF: A. LUSAKA 730

[1](#)B. LUSAKA 868

[1](#)C. LUSAKA 911

Classified By: Ambassador Donald E. Booth for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

[1](#)1. (C) On November 26, President Banda replaced or reassigned 29 deputy ministers and permanent secretaries, sparking criticism that he is engaging in "tribalism" by appointing friends and allies to key sub-cabinet positions. Banda drew heat for naming long-time personal friend Sherry Thole permanent secretary in the Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training and for appointing Eustarckio Kazonga of his home Eastern Province the Minister of Local Government and Housing, a job traditionally reserved for an official from North Western Province. Critics also accused Banda of choosing two officials from Western province to placate the Barotse Royal Establishment, which represents the Western-based Lozi indigenous group. Banda appears to have made changes to his government to prepare for the 2011 presidential election. The newly appointed officials hailed from seven of nine provinces. Twenty of the 29 appointees came from provinces Banda carried in the 2008 by-election.

[1](#)2. (C) COMMENT: It appears that on the heels of two by-election losses (refs A and B), Banda named officials from MMD strongholds to help shore up his support in areas where the MMD has traditionally been strong. The officials also appear to be Banda loyalists who can solidify his personal control within the party in the lead up to the 2011 elections and help push his agenda from the sub-cabinet level (ref C).
END COMMENT.
BOOTH